(c) and (d) Heavy Earth Moving Machineries have been taken on hire from some of the Contrators, notably those mentioned at serials 1 to 7, as above, for removing small quarriable patches in small pocket where engagement of departmental equipments have not been found to be economically viable or operationally expedient. Engagement of hired equipments does not appear to have been prohibited or construed violative of any law relating to mining activities.

Review petitions on drugs

1427. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of review petitions on drugs are pending in his Ministry since long;

(b) what is the total number of review petitions pending indicating the date since when pending;

(c) by when all the pending review petitions are likely to be disposed off;

(d) whether it is also a fact that huge number of cases of unintended benefit are lying pending for working out the amount since 1980; and

(e) if so, what are the reasons and by when the claim in each case is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETRO-CHEMICALS IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) and (b) Some of the review petitions filed by the companies could not be disposed of due to various reasons like court judgements, long process involved in the scrutiny of claims made by the companies and insistence of some of the companies on personal hearing and reconsideration even after disposal. Exact number of undisposed cases cannot be furnished as prices of several thousand formulations have been fixed/revised.

(c) This is a continuing process.

(d) and (e) In some cases, the amount due to the Drugs Prices Equalisation Account is yet to be worked out. Efforts are being made to finalise such cases expeditiously.

Price index of medicines

1428. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the increase in prices of medicines is the highest of all the commodities in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that almost all the drugs on which wholesale price index is based have become obsolete;

(c) what are the names of drugs on which price index is based, indicating the base year;

(d) what was the consumption of those drugs, in value and sales turn over and of formulations based on these drugs during the last three years, year-wise indicating the percentage this bears to the total consumpion of drugs and formulations and their sales turn over in the country;

(e) which new drugs have taken their place; and

(f) what steps have bee taken to ensure that drug prices correctly reflect the wholesale price index?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETRO-CHEMICALS IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) No Sir. There is no evidence to suggest that the price increase in the case of medicines is higher than that in the case of all other commodities.

(b), (e) and (f) The wholesale price index is already under review. While revising the basket, production/consumption pattern of all drugs would be kept in view.

(c) Names of 12 bulk drugs prices of which are reflected in the wholesale price